

CATHERINE'S LITERARY WORK

are of his body. The face of the Church, the Spouse of Christ, has grown like that of one smitten with leprosy, through impurity, the self-love, the pride and avarice of her ministers, those who feed at her breasts "; but by the prayers, desires, i, and labours of God's servants, her beauty will be restored so, for the humanity of the Word still stands as the bridge between earth and Heaven.

This figure of the Word as the bridge from time to eternity, road to which has been broken by the fall of Adam, is worked at length, Catherine laying stress upon the doctrine that " the eternal Truth has created us without ourselves, but will not save without ourselves." The bridge has three steps or grades : Feet that were nailed to the Cross ; the Side, that was pierced to reveal the ineffable love of the Heart; the Mouth, where the bitterness of gall and vinegar is turned to peace. On the bridge Catherine's imagery suddenly changing form) is the garden of Church, to minister the bread of life and the blood that is life, in order that the pilgrims may not faint by the way. These three steps also represent the three powers of the soul: , memory, and understanding ; as likewise the three states of soul in God's service, by which she passes from servile fear mercenary obedience to true fidelity and friendship, and, y, to perfect filial love.

" I require of you that you love Me with that love wherewith ye love Me. This you cannot do to Me, because I loved you without being loved. All love that you bear Me you owe Me as debt, and not as a free gift, because you are bound to give it ; and I love you freely, not in duty bound. You cannot, i, render to Me the love that I require of you ; and, therefore, 21 set you in the midst of others, in order that you may do to others what you cannot do to Me ; that is, love them freely and without reserve, and without expecting any return from it; and i I consider done to Me whatever you do to them. So this 5 must be flawless, and you must love them with the love wherewith you love Me. And knowest thou how he who loves in spiritual love perceives that he is not perfect ? If he feels